

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

**ArrowMight Canada Ltd.**  
99 Fifth Avenue Court | Suite 22 & 23  
Ottawa | ON | K1S 5K4 | Canada  
OFFICE | 613 232-0901  
TOLL FREE | 1 877 332-0901  
FAX | 613 232-8249

August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Dear Mr. James Rajotte, Chair of the House Finance Committee,

The government of Canada and Canadians alike have been looking towards the future of this nation and it's prosperity with a focus on: the importance of jobs for Canadians, economic growth and fiscal sustainability. It is clear that these mandates are what will help create a strong and stable future for Canada.

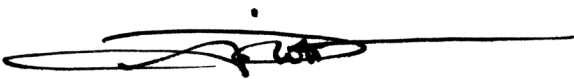
What is sometimes unclear is what first step to take towards achieving these results. It is with this that ArrowMight Canada submits a proposal to the HOC Standing committee on Finance. Investing in educated Canadians is the ideal first step.

Our mission is to change the face of basic education, literacy and numeracy in order to create a more economically prosperous nation where everyone is trained and educated. We will outline in this submission the reasons why education in general, and an employability-skills program specifically, is the first step to creating a thriving economic, social and political framework to help Canada prosper in the next generation.

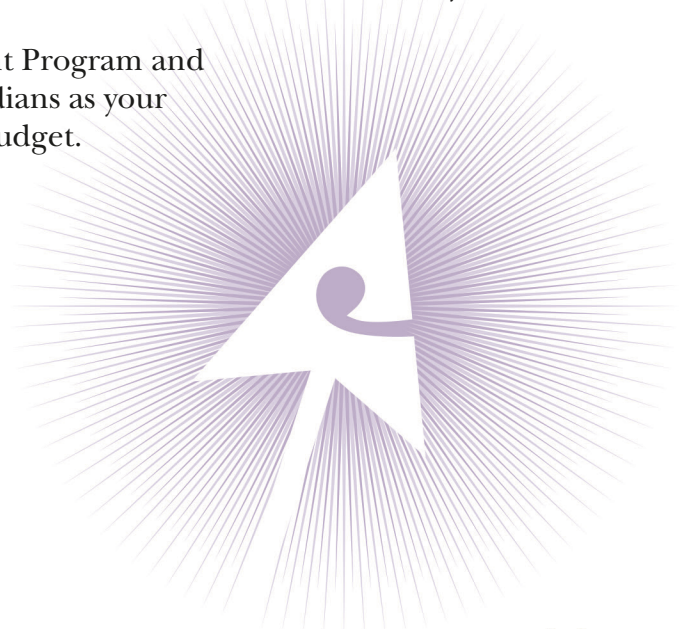
The ArrowMight program is a wholly Canadian home based literacy, numeracy, Essential Skills, workplace skills and training program which brings adults from virtually no education or very low levels to a high school level of literacy, numeracy and skills, including computer and digital literacy. Our submission will outline the importance of basic education, literacy and employable skills in Canada and how the ArrowMight program could be the best economic solution to a need in this country.

It is our sincere hope that you will consider the ArrowMight Program and ArrowMight's method of accessible education for all Canadians as your committee reviews the priorities and the upcoming 2015 budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Avalyne Diotte', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Avalyne Diotte  
VP, ArrowMight Canada



*“The time to learn is now the whole lifetime,  
and each field of knowledge spreads into  
and enriches the others.”<sup>1</sup>*

## **Executive Summary**

The recent release in June 2014 outlines the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance’s priorities and themes in looking toward the 2015 budget. Two of the key priorities outlined are:

1. Supporting families and helping vulnerable Canadians by focusing on health, education and training.
2. Maximizing the number and types of jobs for Canadians.

The purpose of this proposal is to shed light on an existing and innovative program that can assist the Federal Government in fulfilling the fiscal, economic and social goals in Canada through education and employable skills training.

ArrowMight Canada has developed and is running a national adult-education program. It focuses on literacy, numeracy, workplace and employability skills and HRSDC’s Essential Skills. ArrowMight brings English speaking adults in Canada from a basic understanding to a high school level and beyond, preparing them with the skills and practice necessary to apply for post-secondary education, trades programs or enter into the workforce.

## **Learning for Life**

ArrowMight is about life long learning, and as such the program is designed to be delivered in the home, allowing multiple people to learn for the same cost. It is possible to run the program from a centre or community base however the self-directed learning model allows students to work at their pace and to fit education into their schedule. Through cultural, academic and practical Canadian content, the program speaks to each target market in need within Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> The right to education: Towards education for all throughout life  
<http://www.unesco.org/education/information/wer/PDFeng/wholewer.PDF>

This program is designed and works for everyone. In a pilot conducted in 2010 (in Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia) the findings proved that only one comprehensive and practically oriented program to target everyone, from all cultures, backgrounds and ethnicities is needed —

- Aboriginal people identify with the cultural representation and teachings,
- new immigrants to Canada learn amazing amounts of information about Canada’s systems, landscape, history and geography,
- people who live in rural areas without easy access to urban centres are able to advance their skills and education and be able to become part of the workforce, *and*
- all Canadians wishing to upgrade their skills find the program entertaining, flexible, current and are amazed by the academic progress that can be made in only a year and a half.

### **Computer skills & the digital world**

It is the ArrowMight philosophy that today digital literacy is paramount. Knowing how to read, write and communicate effectively is key, but knowing how to use a computer is equally as essential; however one must be literate before being able to be digitally literate. The fourth module of the program is a practical and hands-on approach to learning about computers and how to use their functions. The learning method through each module is consistent regardless of the content so students are able to advance quickly and efficiently.

## **Reduce Spending. Increase Results.**

The government of Canada has been trying to invest in the people of this country when it comes to jobs and education. And yet, the cost and spending in many areas does not have to be as high as it currently is to fix a need.

When we look at the fact that \$31 billion annually is given to unemployment and social assistance payments and Worker’s Compensation in Canada, a compelling case can be made for an employment and skills program that can reach all Canadians and begin to reduce this amount of spending.

Financial support for Aboriginal people under the ASETS program are \$246.1 – \$254.6 million from 2010 to 2015.<sup>2</sup> That’s over a billion dollars in 5 years that will help 14,000

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<sup>2</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada, *Departmental Performance Report 2012-2013*, Supplementary Information Tables, Table 1, 2013. Employment and Social Development Canada, *Report on Plans and Priorities – 2014-15*, Details on Transfer Payment Programs, Table 1, 2014

to 16,500 Aboriginal people a year become part of the work force. These figures indicate it costs about \$15,000 per student to support them into the workforce, including basic education if a student were in need.

The cost to bring an adult student to employable education and skill-levels through ArrowMight would be a third of that. Similarly, the cost of ArrowMight is one-third of the recently proposed Canadian Job Grand Scheme. And multiple people can be reached for the same cost. Basic education through an employment program for vulnerable Canadians is an area that can gain huge fiscal and social rewards.

ArrowMight offers a solution two very important items in need.

1. A comprehensive program for basic education, literacy, numeracy and employability skills.
2. At a cost that is a fraction of what the Government of Canada has been spending.

## **Educate people. Save money.**

With the ArrowMight program having already been created and funded by a charitable trust in New Zealand, the program is ready for delivery. The ArrowMight program has been benchmarked with HRSDC's nine Essential Skills, The International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS), with Provincial Curriculums and apprenticeship boards. Internal and external pilots have been conducted in various Provinces and Territories and partnerships with Colleges and Municipal and Provincial Governments have been established. This means that in addition to having a roll-out-ready, wholly Canadian program, research and development costs are non-existent. Funding therefore could begin to go towards making change happen through education and helping vulnerable Canadians.

ArrowMight operates on a partnership model. ArrowMight offers the existing program, resources, training and monitoring and works with other organizations to deliver the program. This type of partnership model not only supports existing infrastructure and organizations in Canada it also increases the accessible areas across the country while creating new jobs in communities and within provider-organizations.

### **Licence Fee includes:**

- All student resources (including the laptop which is the M4 textbook).
- Complementary exercises for each lesson.
- All required training for Community Facilitator(s) and Provider Representative.
- All program assessments and marking criteria for producing student results.
- Access and use of ArrowMight Learning Management System (LMS) for accountable tracking of student progress.

- Reports from LMS.
- Two-year longitudinal study post-graduation (voluntary participation)
- On-going monitoring and supervision by ArrowMight.
- Extra student workbooks at no charge for each student in the same household
- Any enrolled student who drops out in Module 1 would be replaced at no charge.
- Rolling enrolments allow for flexible start and completion.

### Cost of the program:

- \$3,800 per student
- Facilitator salary: TBD
- Facilitator Resource Fee: \$2,000 per community (*one time only*) — includes all student materials, assessment binder, ArrowMight laptop

A community-facilitator is hired by the Provider to support the student’s learning, liaise with the provider and ArrowMight, administer the assessments that evaluate the students’ progress and enter information into the LMS. Along with the DVD’s which correspond to the workbook activities, the Facilitator acts as the human contact to motivate and keep the students on track and on target for successful completion of the ArrowMight program. Each Facilitator can support 30-50 students at a time.

## The springboard to advancement

Education in general, and literacy as a first step to education is the ticket to advancing Canadian individuals. People without basic skills are at a disadvantage that paralyzes their ability to be part of society. Often times they are not only unable to advance in the work world, they are unaware of the options and possibilities that exist out there. The United Nations deems education one of the human rights outlined in their 1948 declaration. They further identify that in order for people to contribute towards building something better for themselves and their society “education must be made available and equally accessible to all”<sup>3</sup>.

Globally more than 800 million people have low literacy levels disabling their ability to be part of their global economy and affecting everything from productivity to long-term illness to crime rates to poverty. The far-reaching impact a lack of basic education has is catastrophic, literally ruining peoples’ lives<sup>4</sup> and in turn having a huge impact on their family, community and nation. While many people think these issues and the statistics are from third world nations, the situation in Canada is in need of attention too. In Canada:

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/education/information/wer/PDFeng/wholewer.PDF>

<sup>4</sup> The economic & Social Cost of Illiteracy  
[http://www.worldliteracyfoundation.org/The\\_Economic\\_&\\_Social\\_Cost\\_of\\_Illiteracy.pdf](http://www.worldliteracyfoundation.org/The_Economic_&_Social_Cost_of_Illiteracy.pdf)

- 42% of Canadian adults between the ages of 16 and 65 have low literacy skills.
- Less than 20% of people with the lowest literacy skills are employed.
- A 1% increase in the literacy rate would generate \$18 billion in economic growth every year.
- Investment in literacy programming has a 241% return on investment.<sup>5</sup>

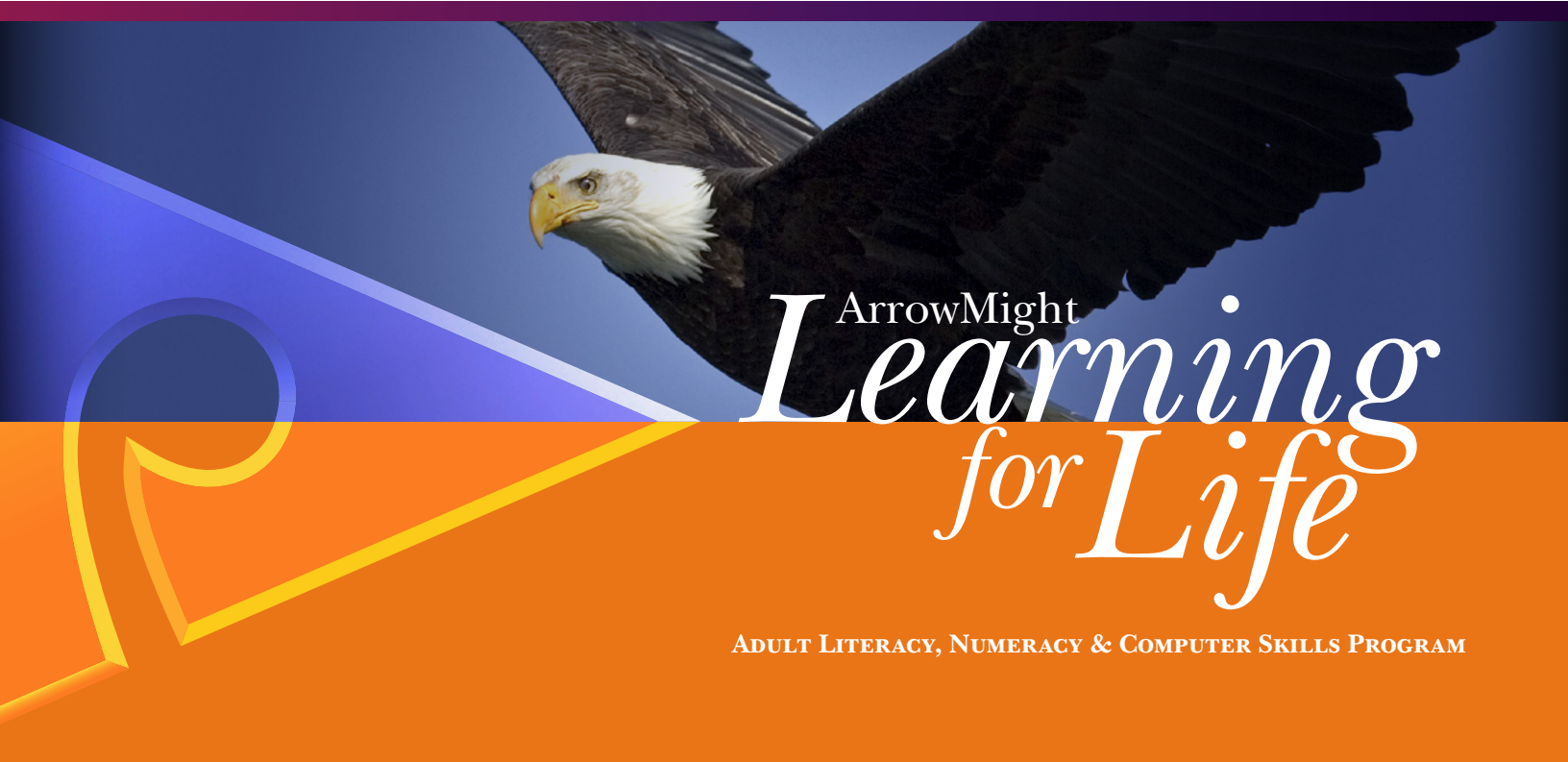
A solution is needed. The lower educated people or people without certain skills are the most vulnerable.

*Imagine* a program that could raise workplace skills, literacy and education levels thereby supporting the most vulnerable Canadians and their families through education, health and training. *Imagine* a program that could bring jobs to communities, increasing the number and types of jobs for Canadians and in turn create more skilled citizens to be motivated to enter the workforce or post-secondary education. *Imagine* if the cost to launch a program (which would not only help multiple generations now but also have a lasting impact for generations to come) was not only effective but a fraction of the cost of current spending.

As the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance reviews the priorities of the Government of Canada's 2015 budget, we hope the committee will give further attention and discussion to allocating funding for the first step in an economically prosperous Canada: basic adult education for all. ArrowMight is ready. Canadians are waiting.

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5 Literacy Statistics in Canada <http://www.literacy.ca/literacy/literacy-sub/>



ArrowMight  
*Learning  
 for Life*

ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY & COMPUTER SKILLS PROGRAM